

EVALUATION OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA: THE DEMAND DRIVEN APPROACH PERSPECTIVE

KOLAWOLE, Roseline J.

Department of Entrepreneurship, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria.

P.M.B 704 Akure Ondo State Nigeria

E-mail: rjakinlade@futa.edu.ng/ jummy120@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

This review was undertaken to examine why poverty still remains high despite various policies implemented by the Nigerian government. The review showed that the poverty alleviation measures implemented so far have focused more on growth, basic needs and rural development approaches. Most of the poverty alleviation strategies adopted in Nigeria were well focused on rural areas and agricultural sector. It was observed that most of these programmes before and during Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) were supply driven which could not meet the needs of the poor and so they had little effect in alleviating poverty. After SAP, some programmes implemented used demand driven approach to meet the target poor. Although, poverty reduced due to this approach but the very poor (vulnerable) were not targeted in some of these programmes. This paper recommended that there should be prevention of elite capture through proper targeting in any project.

Key words: Evaluation, Poverty, Alleviation, Programmes, Approach, Impact, Nigeria

Introduction

Despite massive progress in reducing poverty in some parts of the world over the past couple of decades there are still about 689 million people living on less than \$1.90 a day, In developing countries, 22% of the world population live in multidimensional poverty. Women represent a majority of the poor in most regions. Also extreme poverty is increasingly concentrated in sub Saharan Africa with almost half of poor people in the region living in just 5 countries: Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Madagascar (World Bank, 2020).

Nigeria, being one of the countries in sub Saharan Africa with high poverty rate, has for a long time, designed and implemented several policies and programmes if not to meet the special needs of the poor, at least to reach them. These programmes include: the establishment of the National Accelerated Food Production Project (NAFPP), Green Revolution, Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), People's Bank, Community Bank and Small-Scale Industries Credit Scheme, the Family Support Programme (FSP), Presidential Initiatives on Cocoa, Cassava, Rice, Livestock, Fisheries and Vegetables, the National Land Agricultural Development Agency (NALDA), Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Family Advancement Economic Programme (FEAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Economic Empowerment and Development Scheme (NEEDS) and its counterparts at the State and Local Government levels (Nuhu, 2007; Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, 2008; Bakare, 2011; United Nations Development Programme, 2014). Recently, there has been a reorientation of the government's focus towards developing Community-Based Poverty Reduction using

Community Driven Development approach (World Bank, 2021). In Nigeria, under this approach, several programmes have been implemented and some are still on. Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Programme (LEEMP); Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project (CPRP) and Community and Social Development Project (CSDP) are social Community Driven Development (CDD) projects while National *Fadama* Development Project (*Fadama* II and III) is economic CDD project (World Bank, 2021). However, the fact that the incidence of poverty remains very high, the existence of the various poverty alleviation programmes notwithstanding requires examination of the factors that contribute to this, especially among the core poor which is needed for effective targeting of different policies and interventions. Therefore, this study is set to assess some of the poverty alleviation programmes designed and implemented before, during and after SAP. This is to identify the approaches employed and effects on the poor.

Approaches to Poverty Alleviation

There are four approaches to poverty alleviation. These include: Economic Growth Approach, Basic Needs Approach, Rural Development Approach and Target Approach (Edralin, Tibon and Tugas, 2015). These approaches are discussed in details below:

Economic Growth Approach This approach focuses on capital formation as it relates to capital stock and human capital. Human capital formation has to do with education, health, nutrition and housing needs of labour. This is obvious from the fact that investments in these sources of human capital improve the quality of labour and thus its productivity (Misana, 1995; Sazama and Young, 2006; Edralin, et.al., 2015). Hence, to ensure growth that takes care of poverty, the share of human capital as a source of growth in output has to be accorded the rightful place.

Basic Needs Approach This calls for the provision of basic needs such as food, shelter, water, sanitation, health care, basic education, transportation etc. unless there is proper targeting, this approach may not directly impact on the poor because of their inherent disadvantage in terms of political power and the ability to influence the choice and location of government programmes and projects (Ogwumike, 2002).

Rural Development Approach This approach sees the rural sector as a unique sector in terms of poverty reduction. This is because majority of the poor in developing countries live in this sector. In addition, the level of paid employment in this sector is very minimal. Hence, traditional measures of alleviating poverty may not easily work in the rural sector without radical changes in the assets ownership structure, credit structure, etc. Emphasis in this approach to development has focused on the integrated approach to rural development. This approach recognizes that poverty is multi-dimensional and therefore, requires a multi-pronged approach. The approach aims at the provision of basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, safe drinking water, education, health care, employment and income generating opportunities to the rural dwellers in general and the poor in particular. One basic problem with this approach to poverty reduction is that it is difficult to focus attention on the real poor given that poverty in the rural area is pervasive. In other words it makes targeting of poverty reduction programmes very difficult (Oladimeji and Abiola, 1998).

Target Approach This approach favours the directing of poverty alleviation programmes to specific groups within the country. This approach includes such programmes as Social Safety

Nets, Micro Credits, and School Meal programme (Oladimeji and Abiola, 1998). This approach requires proper identification of the target group so as to minimize leakages. Globally, in recent times the concern over increasing income inequality and poverty levels especially in the developing countries and the need for its alleviation as a means of improving the standard of living of the people has led to shifting from Supply Driven Approach to Demand Driven approach through the conceptualization and implementation of various Community Driven Development (CDD) programmes. Since targeting the poor has been one of the challenges of development and emergency response programmes (Farrington and Salter, 2006), it is argued that using CDDs could improve targeting since the CDDs use better local knowledge to define and identify the targeted groups (Mansuri and Rao, 2004).

Community Driven Development (CDD) Approach - CDD is broadly defined as giving control of decisions and resources to community groups. CDD approaches, by contrast, treat poor people and their institutions as initiators, as collaborators and as resources on which to build. World Bank (2003) defines CDD as an effective mechanism for poverty reduction, complementing market- and state- run activity by achieving immediate and lasting results at the grass roots level. CDD can enhance sustainability and make poverty reduction effort more responsive to demand. It has also been shown to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts; it has the potential to occur simultaneously in a very large number of communities, thus achieving far-reaching poverty impact.

The Community-Driven Development (CDD) approach has become one of the key development strategies used by both government and development assistance programmes (Mansuri and Rao, 2004; Platteau, 2004; Gillespie, 2004). The CDD popularity has been propelled by its potential to develop projects and programmes that are sustainable, responsive to local priorities, empower local communities to manage and govern their own development programmes, and are better targeted toward poor and vulnerable groups (Dongier, et al., 2001; Gillespie, 2004).

Khwaja (2001) observed that projects managed by communities were more sustainable than those managed by local governments because of better maintenance. However, Cleaver (1999), Kleimeer (2000), and Mosse (1997) found that CDD projects that lacked external institutional, financial, and technical support were not sustainable. Targeting the poor has been one of the challenges of development and emergency response programmes (Farrington and Slater, 2006). One argument in favour of CDD asserts that it can improve targeting because CDD projects make better use of local knowledge to define and identify the targeted groups (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). However, there has been mixed empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of targeting using the CDD approach. A review concluded that in heterogeneous communities with high social inequality, the performance of CDD projects in targeting has been worse than that of externally managed programmes (Conning and Kevane, 2002). However, the review also revealed that in egalitarian communities with open and transparent systems of decision making, targeting was better with CDD than with development approaches using external project management.

Alkire, Bebbington, Esmail, Ostrom, Polski, Ryan, Van Domelen, Wakeman, and Dongier (2001) also defined CDD as a demand driven approach which recognizes that poor people are prime actors in the development process, not targets of externally designed poverty reduction efforts. In CDD, control of decisions and resources rests with community groups, who may often work in partnership with demand-responsive support organizations and service providers, including elected local governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and central government agencies. Experience has shown that, given clear rules of the game, access to information, and appropriate support, poor men and women can effectively organize to provide goods and services that meet their immediate priorities. Not only do poor communities have greater capacity than generally recognized, they also have the most to gain from making good use of resources targeted at poverty reduction (Alkire *et al.*, 2001). CDD's potential is increasingly recognized. Individual studies have shown that CDD can increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of projects or programmes, making them more pro-poor and responsive to local priorities. Other objectives include developing capacity, building social and human capital, facilitating community and individual empowerment, deepening democracy, improving governance, and strengthening human rights (Mansuri and Rao 2003; World Bank, 2021).

Poverty Alleviation Programmes and Strategies in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the poverty alleviation measures implemented so far have focused more on growth, basic needs and rural development approaches. It is important to note that most of the poverty alleviation strategies adopted in Nigeria were well focused on rural areas and on the agricultural sector. This is because poverty in Nigeria is largely a rural phenomenon with agriculture accounting for the highest incidence over the years. Besides, poverty reduction depends, to a large extent, on the agricultural sector, because the sector not only provides food for consumption as well as raw materials for manufacturing activities, it is the main employer of labour especially in the rural areas (Ogwumike, 2002). There are three periods that can be identified: Pre- Structural Adjustment Programme (Pre –SAP) era, SAP era and Democratic era.

Pre- Structural Adjustment Programme (Pre-SAP) Era

Poverty reduction was never the direct focus of development planning and management during Pre- SAP era. Government only showed concern for poverty reduction indirectly. During this era, Nigeria had prepared and executed four national development plans as follows: First National Development Plan 1962-68, Second National Development Plan 1970-74, Third National development Plan 1975-80 and the Fourth National Development Plan 1981-85. During this era, many of the programmes which were put in place in Nigeria by the government (either wholly or in association with international agencies) had positive effects on poverty reduction although the target population for some of the programmes was not specified explicitly as poor people or communities (Onyenwigwe, 2009; Iheanacho, 2014). Some of these programmes are farm production enhancement programmes which tended to facilitate and support farmers in their production.

One of the first such programmes was the Farm Settlement Scheme (FSS) of the old Western region of Nigeria. The FSS was intended to put more lands under farming by engaging young school leavers in farming communities where they were expected to live together and

share facilities and responsibilities (Olatunbosun, 1964; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). Also after the civil war in 1970, Federal Military Government of Nigeria became more involved in initiating these programmes. These programmes include: the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP); the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and the Green Revolution Programme (GRP). These were intended to improve the food situation in the country after the debilitating civil war. NAFPP was a general-purpose food production programme, which was intended to make more resources available to farmers on their turfs through mobilization of extension workers. OFN was an awareness of programme intended to educate people generally to engage in food production around their homes, schools and on any available piece of land (Jibowo, 2005). GRP was initiated as a comprehensive development programme designed to revolutionise not only food production but also export tree crops production (Iwuchukwu & Igbokwe, 2012). Several instruments were considered in implementing GRP, but the most significant in terms of scope and financial commitment was harnessing of the water of Nigeria's river basin for food production (Antonio & Akinyosoye, 1986). This led to Nigeria's River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs). In addition to the activities of RBDAs, the Agricultural Development Project (ADPs) became a major initiative for supporting the agricultural sector and rural economy of the nation in the 1980s. ADPs were to provide extension services, technical input support and rural infrastructure services. They also provide temporary role in providing advisory services (Antonio & Akinyosoye, 1986).

The most serious intervention in developing a modern agricultural marketing system in Nigeria was the establishment of the marketing boards for the major crops of the country between 1947 -1986 to serve as buyer of last resort, at fixed prices and held strategic or buffer stock. The marketing boards functioned as para-public sector organizations, otherwise known as parastatals. They enjoyed a certain level of administrative autonomy but were still under close government supervision (Idachaba & Ayoola, 1992). Marketing boards in Nigeria were characterized by many ills generally associated with government business concerns. They suffered from bureaucratic nuisances, very large staff size, most of them not qualified for the positions they held and poorly-paid. Excessive intervention in their management, relative insecurity of tenure and high operating costs contributed to the low level of efficiency in the boards (Olubanjo Akinleye & Ayanda, 2009)

Other programmes during this era included the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS), the Rural Electrification Scheme (RES), the Rural Banking Programme (RBP), Free and Compulsory Primary Education (FCPE) set up also in 1977, Green Revolution established in 1980, and Low Cost Housing Scheme. Most of these programmes were designed to take care of such objectives as employment generation, enhancing agricultural output and income, and stemming the tide of rural – urban migration. These programmes made some laudable impacts; they enhanced the quality of life of many Nigerians. Despite this, they could not be sustained due to lack of political will and commitment, policy instability and insufficient involvement of the beneficiaries in these programmes (Ogwumike, 1987, 1996, and 1998; CBN, 1998; Akinyosoye, 2005; Nnadozie, 2014; Iheanacho, 2014).

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) Era

Conscious policy effort by government towards poverty alleviation began in Nigeria during the era of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The severe economic crisis in Nigeria in the early 1980s worsened the quality of life of most Nigerians. The government made determined effort to check the crisis through the adoption of SAP. However, the implementation of SAP further worsened the living conditions of many Nigerians especially the poor who were the most vulnerable group. This made the government to design and implement many poverty alleviation programmes between 1986 and 1993. Also under the guided deregulation that spanned the period 1993 to 1998, more poverty reduction programmes were put in place by government. Some of the programmes under this era included Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life Programme (BLP), People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Community Banks (CB), Family Support Programme (FSP), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA), the Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP), and the Strategic Grains Reserves Programmes (SGRP), the Primary Health Care Scheme (PHCS) and the Guinea Worm Eradication Programme.

The Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) was the first rural infrastructure development initiative in the country which was created in 1986 to act as catalyst for rural development by providing rural areas with various items of infrastructural services from the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of rural feeder roads, rural market places, rural electricity installations and rural potable water installations for rain water catchments and ground water exploitation. DFRRI programme only touched the lives of very few rural dwellers and people saw it as largely political as they did not internalise the ideas of self-development embedded into this seemingly revolutionary concept in rural transformation (Idachaba, 1988).

National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA) was initiated with the mandate to expand land under cultivation by creating large farm communities similar in concept to the old Western Region FSS. Other programmes that were initiated in the 1990s were Agricultural Land Resource Management Programme. The objectives of the programme are the selection of suitable lands for the production of specific crops through soil surveys and land evaluation; monitoring and improvement of their qualities through soil fertility management; and ensuring the conservation of the fertility of the lands through rehabilitation. The project was not implemented due to limited financial resources and lack of technical personnel (Ayoola, 2001).

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme (RUWASSAN) took off in 1995; the aim was to assist States to attain at least 50 per cent national coverage for rural water supply by 2000. The problem with RUWASSAN is similar to that of other rural programmes that are executed without regard to existing organizations. RUWASSAN provided services that the State Water Supply Agencies and Health institutions were established to perform.

During this era, some rural household empowerment programmes were also implemented. One of such programmes was **Better Life for Rural Women Programme (BLP)**. It was established to alleviate poverty and eliminate ignorance among rural people,

particularly women. The programme metamorphosed into **the Family Support Programme (FSP)** in 1994 under a military government. By 1997, another variant of the BLP and FSP had been designed by the Federal Government and was called the **Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)**. This is an empowerment programme designed specifically for locally based producers of goods and services and potential entrepreneurs in the cottage industries. The programme is aimed at improving the standard of living of the low-income groups by stimulating appropriate economic activities in the various wards of each local government area in the country (Obasi and Oguche, 1995). By 1999, all these previously established programmes were consolidated into the **Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPs)**. All these old and new programmes follow the same approach of micro credit and promotion of rural-based Small-Scale Enterprises (Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012). The programmes were not well thought-out and the various programme activities not planned for. They were long on propaganda (if not noise-making) but short of substance. Sustainability was not built into their planning; hence programme names changed anytime a new government came on board. Institutions created to manage the programme only benefitted the managers of the programme. The programmes were deceptive rather than empower rural households to develop self-sustaining enterprise as they thrust on them a dependency syndrome with a “beggar” mentality that did not prepare the rural people to have the needed market and political power to demand for and get their entitlements from government (Akinyosoye, 2005; Iwuchukwu and Igbokwe, 2012).

Democratic Era (Post-SAP)

During the democratic era, governments also designed and implemented various programmes and strategies to alleviate poverty. National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and Seven Point Agenda were the strategies initiated during this era. National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) was Nigeria’s home-grown poverty reduction strategy (PRSP). NEEDS was a medium term strategy (2003-07) but which derived from the country’s long-term goals of poverty reduction, wealth creation, employment generation and value re-orientation. NEEDS was a nationally coordinated framework of action in close collaboration with the State and Local governments (with their State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, SEEDS) and other stakeholders to consolidate on the achievements of the 1999- 2003 democratic dispensation (World Bank, 2010). NEEDS has four key strategies: reforming the way government works and its institutions; growing the private sector; implementing a social charter for the people; and re-orientation of the people with an enduring African value system (Ejumudo, 2013; Iheanacho, 2014).

Reforming Government and Institutions - The goal of NEEDS is to restructure, right-size, re-professionalized and strengthen government and public institutions to deliver effective services to the people. It also aimed at eliminating waste and inefficiency, and free up resources for investment in infrastructure and social services by government. *Growing the private sector* - NEEDS is a development strategy anchored on the private sector as the engine of growth for wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction (Iheanacho, 2014). The government is the enabler, the facilitator and the regulator. The private sector is the executor, the direct investor and manager of businesses. The key elements of this strategy included the

renewed privatization, de-regulation and liberalization programme. *Implementing social charter* - NEEDS was about people; it was about their welfare, their health, education, employment, poverty-reduction, empowerment, security and participation. This is the overarching ultimate goal of NEEDS (World Bank, 2010).

National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the economic development blueprint, developed by Obasanjo's regime, has influenced the creation of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's 7-Point Agenda; an articulation of policy priorities to strengthen the reforms and build the economy, so that the gains of the reforms are felt widely by citizens across the country. The Seven Points Agenda was on the following areas power and energy, food security, wealth creation, transport, land reforms, security, education (Federal Ministry of Information and Communications, 2007; Dode, 2010). All of these agenda just appeared on the pages of newspapers; however, they were not fully realized.

Community-Driven Development Programmes in Nigeria

During this democratic era, several CDD projects have been implemented and some are still on or about to be implemented. These include Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Programme (LEEMP), Community based Poverty Reduction Programme (CPRP), Community and Social Development Project (CSDP), Community Based Agricultural and Rural Development Project, Community Based Natural Resources Management Project, *Fadama II* and now *Fadama III*. These are explained below.

Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Project (LEEMP)

Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Project (LEEMP), a Community Driven Development Project that became effective in 2004 is being implemented in nine states. The participating states included Adamawa, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Enugu, Imo, Katsina, Niger and Oyo (Ojoawo, 2013). LEEMP has been designed to establish an institutional mechanism for transferring investment resource to communities, so that they can finance their own investment priorities. In addition, it emphasizes the management of the environment as a prerequisite to sustainable livelihoods and development. It is financed by the International Development Association (IDA), state governments and participating beneficiary communities. It seeks to reduce poverty, stimulate growth and empower people using a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, which emphasizes social, natural resources and environmental management. LEEMP engenders social inclusion through gender equality and people's participation. It creates job opportunities and wealth through the provision of support for various income-generating activities. It provides support for policy and legislative reforms in the environmental sector and for communities to engage in sustainable agricultural practices, improve access to market, and mainstreaming the environment (NISER, 2007). The problems of unsuitable management of the rural environment, poor utilisation of natural resources; extremely rural and urban poverty and highly centralized government are addressed in Nigeria by these projects (Onah *et al.*, 2013). LEEMP operates within the strategy of Community-Driven Development through the promotion of participatory decision-making, integrated multi-sectoral planning and sustainable environmental impact control among micro-project communities (Nnabuike, 2014).

Community –Based Poverty Reduction Project (CPRP)

The development objectives of this project include the improvement of access of the poor to social and economic infrastructure and to increase the availability and management of development resources at the community level. The output of the project is to improve services and infrastructure in poor beneficiary communities; Increased capacity of federal government to support, monitor and evaluate poverty reduction activities; increased capacity at state level for implementing community-driven projects; Establishment of effective agencies in 12 states for financing community-generated projects and the activity; Input of the project is capacity-building which was designed to strengthen federal, state and local government capacity for poverty reduction policy design and dissemination, advocacy and sensitization of stakeholders (Babagana, 2002; Mansuri and Rao, 2003; Federal Ministry of Finance, 2008).

Community and Social Development Project (CSDP)

This is a Community Driven Development project that was initiated on July 2008 to end on December, 2013. CSDP is a five-year Sector Investment Loan (SIL) to allow for (i) the scaling up of the CDD approach from the CPRP and LEEMP states, to other states in Nigeria, (ii) the institutionalization of the CDD approach in the planning approaches adopted by the three levels of government, (iii) response to the challenge of human development at the grassroots level in a sustainable and participatory manner and (iv) improved sustainable natural resource management. The project aims to sustainably increase the access of poor people to social and natural resource infrastructure services through supporting (i) the empowerment of communities to develop, implement and monitor micro social infrastructure projects (public and common pool goods) including natural resource management interventions and (ii) strengthening the skills and capacity of local government authorities and sectoral public agencies to support communities and build a partnership between them. The CSDP has four major components. These include (i) Federal Level- Coordination and Program Support (\$10m) (ii) LGA/Sectoral Ministries Capacity and Partnership Building Component (\$20m); Community-Driven Investment Component (\$170m) and Vulnerable groups livelihood investment grants/transfers component (World Bank, 2006; African Development Bank (AfDB), 2009).

Fadama Project

Fadama is a Hausa word for low-lying flood plains; usually with easily accessible shallow groundwater. *Fadama* is typically waterlogged during the rainy seasons but retain moisture during the dry season. *Fadama* also refers to a seasonally flooded area used for farming during the dry season. It is defined as alluvial, lowland formed by erosional and depositional actions of the rivers and streams (Qureshi, 1989). They encompass land and water resources that could easily be developed for irrigation agriculture (World Bank, 1994). These areas are considered to be of high potential for economic development through appropriate investments in infrastructure, household assets, and technical assistance. When *Fadama* spread out over a large area, they are often called wetlands (Blench and Ingawa, 2004; Nkonya *et al*, 2007). Wetlands are recognized by the RAMSAR convention (Ramsar is a place in Iran where the convention was signed) and it is of worldwide significance because of the biodiversity they support. Nigeria is a signatory to this convention. The Ramsar convention of 1971 defined wetlands as areas of marsh, fen, peat land or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water

that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six meters. Land currently used in crop production in the developing countries (excluding China) amounts to some 760 million hectares of arid and hyper arid land used for production through irrigation (FAO, 1995).

The desire to realize the full potential of *Fadama* resources in Nigeria led to the design of the National *Fadama* Development Project, mainly funded by the World Bank, with counterpart funding by the federal and benefiting state governments. *Fadama-I* (phase I of the National *Fadama* Development Project) was implemented during the 1993-99 period. *Fadama-I* focused mainly on crop production and largely neglected downstream activities such as processing, preservation, and marketing. The emphasis of *Fadama-I* was on provision of wash bores to crop farmers through simple credit arrangements aimed at boosting aggregate crop output (NFDO, 2005).

The *Fadama* expansion program is considered to be an instrument for technical transformation in agriculture which would empower the small holder farmers to get out of the poverty trap. On the evaluation of success of *Fadama-I*, according to World Bank (2003); Onoja (2004) and NFDO (2005), this phase 1 failed to attend to some key sectors of the economy as explained below:

1. *Fadama-I* project helped producers increase output, but not to store, preserve and market their surpluses. As a result, much of the output was either not sold at all or sold at low prices due to supply glut, that is, the design of *Fadama-I* did not allow for rural infrastructure to ensure the efficient transportation of farm output to markets.
2. It did not involve and empower key stakeholders such as producer organizations, local government organizations, the private sector and civil society organizations in designing and implementing projects and in providing advisory services. It thus raised concern about project ownership and sustainability.
3. *Fadama-I* did not address mechanisms for conflict resolution in the *Fadama* project areas. It failed to adequately consider the needs of other users of *Fadama* resources (such as livestock producers, fisher folks, pastoralists, hunters, etc.) other than sedentary farmers. As a result, conflict sometimes broke out between the sedentary farmers and pastoralists who found their traditional routes to water and pasture blocked. These confrontations resulted in physical injury and destruction of properties.
4. *Fadama-I* gave little support to the establishment of rural non-farm enterprises. It narrowly focused on crop production neglecting opportunities of values addition through processing and other activities. The drawbacks identified in the *Fadama I* project led to emergence of *Fadama II*.

The Second National *Fadama* Development Project (NFDP-II) is a follow-up on the first phase (1992-1998). The main objective of NFDP-II is to sustainably increase the incomes of the *Fadama* users through expansion of farm and non-farm activities with high value added output. The project, which was declared disbursement effective on May 27, 2004, is funded by the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to the tune of US\$ 100 million and US

\$ 30 million respectively. It covers eighteen states including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Out of the 18 participating states, 12 of them are assisted by the World Bank. The states include Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, FCT, Imo, Kaduna, Kebbi, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Oyo and Taraba (NFDO, 2007). The project was designed also to assist project contracted facilitators and participating Local Government Areas to undertake project related activities at the level of *Fadama* Community Associations (FCAs) and other beneficiary groups of *Fadama* User Groups (FUGs). *Fadama-II* was designed to operate for six years (2004-2010) with a goal of contributing to poverty reduction in Nigeria. However, actual implementation did not begin until September 2005 (Nkonya et.al, 2007).

The direct beneficiaries are the 2 million rural families living in the participating states that are now pursuing their livelihoods in the *Fadama* lands. These are not only farmers, as a significant aim of the project design was to ensure that the various *Fadama* User Groups (FUGs) learn to accept each other's rights to a common resource pool which they share as well as take individual decisions. Thus keeping in mind the impact such actions may have on others and on the *Fadama* environment at large. In the past, *Fadama* use has been dominated by sedentary farmers who are the majority group and also the most vocal and influential. A primary aim of this project was to ensure that other less dominant *Fadama* Users (Fisher folks, Pastoralists) and even marginal Users (hunters, gatherers) were recognized as *Fadama* Users and that their role in maintaining these lands are acknowledged and respected. Moreover, vulnerable sub – groups such as widows, elderly, etc. were targeted to ensure that they are beneficiaries of project – funded activities. Such an approach was aimed at avoiding situations of elite capture and conflict (formal and informal) - a primary obstacle to the success of the first *Fadama* Development Project (Ingawa et al, 2004).

Moreover, the basic strategy of the project was that of a Community Driven Development (CDD) approach with strong emphasis on stake holder participation, especially at the community level. Facilitators supported under the project helped in organizing the *Fadama* Community Associations (FCAs) and guided them through an intensive process of group decision - making using a range of participating techniques, resulting in LDPs. In this manner, the project ensured that every activity funded by the project was conceived after informed discussion by the whole community, which resulted from consensus building and social inclusiveness (Ingawa et al, 2004).

The National *Fadama* Development Project (*Fadama-II*) came into existence with the aim of federal government, to expand the achievements of *Fadama-I* scope and size which is a major instrument for achieving the government's poverty reduction objective in the rural areas of Nigeria. The project was able to achieve its set targets at the end of its six year period. To achieve these outcomes, the project designed five components. These include: Capacity Building, Rural Infrastructure Investment, Pilot Productive Asset, Demand-Responsive Advisory Services, and Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation (NFDO, 2005). The tools employed for effectiveness of the programmes are local framework (logframe), Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Local Development Plan (LDP). However, the success of *Fadama-II* has led to extension of the project to other states of the country in 2010 called

Fadama-III. The aim is to reduce poverty among the beneficiaries in the entire 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria.

The Role of Actors in Poverty Alleviation

In an attempt to alleviate this problem, three actors are identified in the literature as being involved in any given country namely government, bilateral or multilateral international organizations, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

First, at the government level, poverty can be alleviated by directing public expenditure to the most vulnerable groups in the population. However, within the contemporary market philosophy of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in Nigeria, not only is obtaining basic necessities of life increasingly becoming a subject of individual economic power, there is a search for ways to make optimal use of the very scarce government resources. Large public sector deficits also make it necessary to reduce government social services or impose fees on them. The reduction has affected the access of the poor to these services, creating a critical and declining standard of living (Adebayo 1997).

Second, the bilateral or multilateral international organizations, especially the World Bank have immensely contributed to poverty alleviation in human resources development, through renewed investment and policy changes in education and health services, and to alleviate the conditions of the poorest groups of the population, through targeted nutrition and employment programmes. Recently, the World Bank Group (WBG) discussed a new five-year Country Partnership Framework (CPF) from 2021 to 2024 and approved a \$1.5-billion package to help build a resilient recovery post-COVID-19. This is part of the efforts to boost poverty reduction in Nigeria (World Bank Group, 2020).

Third are the NGOs, which operate under different names and different guises in both developed and developing countries. NGOs are considered to play a role in correcting the failures of the state and the market (Edwards, 2009). The NGOs perceived as the alternative for development, offering innovative and community-centered development approaches to service delivery, advocacy and community empowerment (Nader & Foundation, 2016). These organizations help empowering people thereby leading more effective and sustainable local development services than those promoted by the government (Bassey, 2008). When the assistance provided by private, and non-profit groups is considered, one may safely assume that their contributions are indispensable to poverty reduction.

Masoni (1985) is of the opinion that the presence of NGOs within the local community and their special commitment to the betterment of the lives of vulnerable group make them the only practicable link between large-scale investments and the farmers or the city dwellers to whom the investments are directed. He added that the target groups must be reached in ways that can be connected with their lives and work. In relative term, he stated that the sensitivity of NGOs to such concerns and their local knowledge and operations cannot usually be matched by government departments. Therefore, the NGOs have enjoyed considerable success over the last three decades; and are now universally accepted as having an effective role to play in poverty alleviation.

Conclusion

Poverty alleviation programme is expected to benefit the poor by reducing their poverty but due to approach employed by Nigerian government in the implementation of these programmes majority of them failed to address poverty. Also it was discovered that most of these programmes were not pro-poor. Recently, CDD approach was employed in targeting the poor. According to literature it was observed that most of the programmes that employed CDD were pro-poor but not for the very poor (Nkoya et.al, 2007; Akinlade, Yusuf, Omonona and Oyekale, 2011). This could have accounted for the persistence of poverty in the country.

Recommendations

- If this CDD could be properly employed by all the programmes to target the very poor there would be significant reduction in poverty in the nation. The impact of some of these programmes was not felt among the poorest of both male and female. It implies giving equal access to economic resources to both male and female. There is need to encourage more female participation.
- There should be prevention of elite capture through proper targeting in any CDD project.

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